

Landmarks Preservation Commission
July 9, 1985; Designation List 181
LP-1230

SHIVELY SANITARY TENEMENTS (EAST RIVER HOMES, now CHEROKEE APARTMENTS), 507-515 and 517-523 East 77th Street and 508-514 and 516-522 East 78th Street, Borough of Manhattan. Built 1910-1911; architect, Henry Atterbury Smith.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1489, Lots 8 and 37.

On September 11, 1984, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a Public Hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Shively Sanitary Tenements and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 10). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. At this hearing there were two speakers in favor of designation. In addition, the representative of the building's owner stated that he was neither in favor of nor opposed to designation. The Shively Sanitary Tenements had been the subject of a previous Public Hearing on February 10, 1981 (Item No. 9). At this hearing there were two speakers in favor of designation and the owner's representative stated that he was neither in favor of nor opposed to designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The Shively Sanitary Tenements (also known as the East River Homes) are the product of a unique architectural approach to the major societal and medical problems caused by tuberculosis in the early twentieth century. Conceived by the prominent physician Dr. Henry Shively, these buildings embody his progressive ideas for providing a healthful living environment for sick persons as a means of attacking the disease at its source. The innovative planning ideas of architect Henry Atterbury Smith are incorporated with an unusual facade design which provides a beautiful and sensitive answer to the special needs of the original residents. The conceptions of these men were translated into bricks and mortar through the generous philanthropy of Mrs. William Kissam Vanderbilt. Together these people created an unprecedented group of buildings which maintains its uniqueness in the city even today.

The Tuberculosis Crisis in Turn-of-the-Century New York

In both 1900 and 1910, tuberculosis was listed as second in causes of death in New York City, only slightly behind pneumonia.¹ These figures showed more than 10,000 people dying from tuberculosis in 1910 while those known to be afflicted with the disease numbered two-and-a-half times that number.² The wide-ranging death and disruption caused by tuberculosis (also called consumption at that time) prompted many efforts to control and stop its spread. Its contagious nature came to be understood only after 1882 when the German bacteriologist Dr. Robert Koch discovered the tubercle bacillus to be the cause of tuberculosis. Efforts then began to focus on identifying existing cases of the disease in order to prevent its further spread. During the late 1880s and early 1900s New York City enacted increasingly strict laws to assure the reporting of cases of the

disease; the City also provided home visits to consumptives by medical personnel. When it became obvious that the overcrowded, poorly lit and poorly ventilated buildings of New York greatly increased the chances for the spread of tuberculosis, attention turned to the improvement of housing conditions for New York City's poor. The 1901 Tenement House Law provided that both new and already existing buildings be fitted with a source for increased air and light, and improved water supply and sanitary equipment.³

Methods of treatment for those who had contracted tuberculosis were limited to the application of abundant fresh air and sunshine, a nutritious diet, rest and cleanliness. These could be attained in several ways. Whenever possible, patients were sent to country sanatoria to "take the cure." Although by the late 1800s there were several of these facilities nearby, such as the Brooklyn Home for Consumptives, St. Joseph's Hospital in the Bronx, and the Montefiore Country Sanatorium at Bedford Hills, they were expensive and their capacity was much smaller than the need. Some hospitals had begun to set aside a certain number of beds for consumptive patients, but it was not until 1902 that the first Tuberculosis Division in a city institution was opened at Metropolitan Hospital. Numerous other institutions opened in the following few years.⁴

In addition to providing care for the sufferers of tuberculosis, these hospitals and sanatoria helped protect their families and the rest of the community from contagion. While under the doctor's supervision, victims received instruction about ways to care for their disease and to improve their overall health and that of their families.

With a disease of such vast proportions, the efforts for its control and treatment were many and varied. Residential space in special institutions was in short supply, as well as expensive and disruptive to home and family; another approach which gained some favor was to let patients live at home while being treated at clinics or day camps. The first tuberculosis clinic was started at Gouverneur Hospital in 1903, with others opening shortly thereafter. Patients lived at home but received care for their illness at the clinic, as well as at home from visiting nurses. The clinic approach was sometimes considered a temporary measure for patients waiting for space to become available at a residential institution.⁵ The first day camp for tuberculosis patients opened in 1908 on an old ferry boat anchored in the river. Here consumptives could receive care during the day, while returning home to their families in the evening. Open-air classes for children were provided as well, to help prevent the disease from occurring in children of ill parents.⁶

With the continued shortage of facilities, more people saw the efficacy of the home approach. A letter to the editor of The New York Times in 1909 advocated home care for consumptives and pointed to successful examples of this type of treatment in Germany.⁷

Dr. Shively's theories, Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt, and the project site

A prominent advocate of the value of home care for tuberculosis sufferers was Dr. Henry Shively, head of the Vanderbilt Clinic of Presbyterian Hospital. The Vanderbilt Clinic, one of the philanthropic causes of William Kissam Vanderbilt, had been established to provide medical care for New York's poor. Many of the clinic's patients suffered

from tuberculosis and the efficient treatment of the disease became one of Shively's chief concerns. In a 1911 article, Shively described tuberculosis as a medical problem with social ramifications, and one that had to be attacked on numerous fronts: social, architectural, and moral, as well as medical. To this end Shively proposed an architectural solution — a building which could bring all the positive features of sanatorium treatment to patients in their own homes.⁸

The Shively Sanitary Tenements (also commonly referred to as the East River Homes or the Vanderbilt Model Tenements) were designed to house tuberculosis patients and their families in a clean, sanitary environment, to provide plenty of fresh air for sick residents and to show that consumptives could remain with their families without infecting others. According to Shively, his purpose was to demonstrate

....the possibilities of the home treatment of suitable cases of tuberculosis, in making more permanent the good results of sanatorium treatment, and in providing the protection of a hygienic home for those who are delicate and anaemic, or convalescent from other exhaustive diseases and thus especially susceptible to tuberculosis.⁹

As a precedent for his idea, Shively cited an experiment conducted by the Swedish National Anti-Tuberculosis Association in Stockholm. Twelve families, each having one or more adult consumptives, were housed together under close medical and hygienic supervision. After three years, none of the children of these families had contracted tuberculosis, in sharp contrast to the normal course of the disease where children were most likely to be infected if their parents were ill.¹⁰

Through his connection with the Vanderbilt Clinic, Shively was able to convince Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt to help fund his experiment. Anna Harriman Vanderbilt, second wife of William Kissam Vanderbilt, dedicated herself to many philanthropic causes. She was concerned with the plight of New York's poor and was active in helping unfortunate children through the Protestant Big Sisters. On an individual basis, she helped relocate families of consumptives to better, healthier living quarters. She was involved with the American Women's Association in New York and played an important role in the founding of the American Red Cross Hospital near Paris during the First World War.¹¹

For the Shively Sanitary Tenements Mrs. Vanderbilt and her husband purchased eighteen city lots on the block between East 77th and 78th Streets from York Avenue to Cherokee Place for \$81,000,¹² and gave an additional \$1,000,000 towards the construction of the buildings. Shively hoped to show that these apartments could eventually pay for themselves and bring a fair return on the initial investment.¹³ With this in mind, the Vanderbilts established a trust to oversee their investment, with William K. Vanderbilt, Anna Harriman Vanderbilt, William K. Vanderbilt, Jr., Henry I. Shively and Walter B. James (another physician associated with Presbyterian Hospital) serving as trustees. The terms of the trust provided that after expenses, one half of the income from these buildings would be used to help poor tuberculosis victims pay for their treatment, and help support the families of those who could not work. One quarter of the income was to go to the Presbyterian Hospital to help pay the expenses

of indigent patients, and the final quarter to the College of Physicians and Surgeons for the same purpose.¹⁴

The site was chosen for its proximity to the East River and its consequent abundance of fresh air. Moreover, it was open to the street on three sides with a school playground on the fourth (west) side. Numerous other service institutions were located nearby, including the Junior League Club House for working girls, a Carnegie Library and the East Side Settlement House.¹⁵ Across Cherokee Place was John Jay Park.¹⁶

Henry Atterbury Smith

The architect chosen to design these model tenements was Henry Atterbury Smith (1872-1954). Having received his architectural education at Columbia University, Smith worked throughout the New York area. His early work consisted primarily of smaller, individual houses but during the early 1900s he developed his concept of the "open stair" plan for apartment buildings as a healthful and economic solution to low- and moderate-cost, multi-family dwellings.¹⁷ He wrote numerous articles for architectural journals promoting his ideas on multi-family housing in general, and especially on the benefits of this particular type of plan. Smith was concerned about the poor quality of most tenement buildings. He wanted to show that apartment houses constructed according to his ideas, with open courtyards and open stairs, could be built soundly, without overcrowding, for moderate expense, and could be healthful environments and thus beneficial to their residents. Smith saw this type of building as an answer for both city and suburban environments, and for many types of people and problems, including the housing shortage brought on by World War I, or for employers who wanted to provide company housing.¹⁸

In 1911 Smith formed the Open Stair Tenement Company to construct buildings of his design. In addition to the East River Homes, his company built the John Jay Homes, across East 77th Street (demolished). In 1917-18, under the name Open Stair Dwellings Company, Smith built more apartments on West 146th and 147th Streets in Manhattan (extant). He was also responsible for several apartment buildings in other parts of the city, including Queens (No. 3418 91st Street).

The East River Homes Project

In the East River Homes, Smith had his first opportunity to put his ideas for a healthful living environment to the test. Although he had developed his theories years earlier, Smith's open stairways did not conform to New York City's building code, and he had been unable to use them. The laws were eventually changed to allow his stairways,¹⁹ but it was Smith's association with Shively that provided the catalyst to change his concepts into actual buildings. Smith's design ideas complemented Shively's plan for housing for tuberculars, enabling both to achieve their goals.

Originally the roof of each building had areas arranged for residents to sit and absorb sun and fresh air. The rooftops were fitted with greenery, tiled floors and windbreaks to make the area more pleasant and attractive. Toilet rooms were also provided for convenience. The design of these roof facilities continued the lively style of the rest of the

building, but they were removed during the 1930s and 1940s.

Smith's design incorporated many elements to help the tubercular residents of the East River Homes but he combined and enlivened them in such a way as to create a beautiful group of buildings which was an asset to the neighborhood as well. On each facade, Smith created a mix of materials, light stone, terra cotta and tan brick, inset with green terracotta ornament, all topped by a projecting green tile roof. The triple-hung windows which were used to increase air flow to the rooms, were carefully and symmetrically arranged across each facade. They were fronted by cast-iron balconies, which allowed people to sit or sleep outside, supported by large, handsome, curving brackets.

The central, projecting entranceways were originally surmounted by parapets with classically-inspired ornament. These strongly-composed elements led to barrel-vaulted passageways lined with Guastavino tile, opening onto the central courtyard of each building. The passageways, the open central courts, and the driveway separating the two buildings on 78th Street were all arranged to provide an uninterrupted flow of air to all areas of the buildings. Shively claimed that the general arrangement of the buildings was derived from the Durchhaeuser of German and Austrian cities. ²⁰

In the interior corners of each courtyard, Smith's "open stairs" rise to the roof level. Though open to the courtyard they were sheltered from inclement weather by wireglass canopies. The stairways were faced with white brick both for cleanliness and to provide a maximum amount of reflected light. The steps were inset with safety treads to prevent slipping; and double handrails were provided, one at a convenient height for adults and one for children. Seats were built into the outside railing at each level, so that those ascending the stairs would be able to sit down and rest along the way. Originally, each stairwell was covered with a glass roof, raised several feet above the top of the wall. This roof kept out the weather while allowing light to enter, and the spacing gave a continuous flow of air through this area. At each level, four apartments opened off the stairway. As Smith saw it, this arrangement eliminated the dark, smelly hallways of most contemporary apartments which allowed germs to breed and people to contaminate each other. Smith related this arrangement to the open stairways found in southern Europe, and specifically to the historical precedents of the Minelli-Contarini Palace in Venice and the Chateau de Blois in France. ²¹

Since an abundance of sunlight and fresh air was known to be beneficial to tuberculosis sufferers, the apartments were arranged to provide these as much as possible. Each apartment had two to five rooms, with a bath. To provide for the maximum air circulation, most of the bedrooms had exposures on the exterior of the building and all rooms except kitchens and baths had floor to ceiling windows with triple sashes.

Everything was designed to make the apartments easy to keep clean and thus more healthy. Radiators were placed on the walls so that dirt and dust would not collect under them. To eliminate cracks and corners the flooring material was carried up on the walls for six inches and was of a type that would not accept the tacking down of permanent carpeting. In the bathrooms, porcelain tubs were built into the walls and the other fixtures

were freestanding to permit ease of cleaning. The gas ranges in the kitchens were topped by ventilating hoods with fans so that fumes and odors could be removed from the apartments.

The roofs of these buildings were fitted with loggias, both open and partly enclosed, so that tenants could use them for fresh air treatment. By providing the roofs with comfortable seats and toilet rooms and by making this area attractive with tiles and greenery, residents were encouraged to spend a great deal of time here. ²²

Description

The Shively Sanitary Tenements consist of four adjoining buildings, two facing East 77th Street and two facing East 78th Street, separated by a driveway which runs through the block from Cherokee Place. The eastern facades of Nos. 517-523 East 77th Street and Nos. 516-522 East 78th Street face Cherokee Place while the western facades of Nos. 507-515 East 77th Street and Nos. 508-514 East 78th Street are adjacent to a school playground. A high wall surrounds the playground so that this side of these buildings is only visible above the level of the first floor. Each building takes the form of a hollow square with an open courtyard in the middle. On 77th Street and 78th Street, there is a deep recess between the two buildings, beyond which they abut to provide a continuous roof area.

The building at Nos. 517-523 East 77th Street is six stories high over a basement and is symmetrically arranged around a central entranceway. To each side of the entrance there is an open areaway framed by a stone and metal railing. The basement windows are segmentally arched, with rusticated voussoirs. The keystone of each window arch rises to form a bracket which supports the narrow balconies of the floor above.

The first story is faced with terra cotta, molded to appear rusticated, and now painted gray. A molded frieze consisting of vertical channels topped by double balls and an egg and dart molding separates the first floor from the rest of the building which is faced with brick. A wide, slightly raised entranceway projects from the building at the center of the first story. A large, squared opening in the entranceway, leads via a passage to the central courtyard of each building. This opening is enhanced by a heavy foliate molding divided into small sections and finished on each side by a pineapple motif. Flanking each side of this entrance opening are large bronze lamps shaped to resemble torches, each topped by a plain white glass globe. Centered at the top of the opening, an enlarged keystone, ornamented with a delicate foliate design set in a panel, rises to the cornice which projects above the entranceway. There are also heavier, ornate console brackets near the top corners of this section which serve as support for this horizontal member. Originally, this entranceway was topped by a balustrade with arched niches above each corner. These have been removed and a plain metal railing runs in front of the second floor windows which are located above the entranceway.

The windows are symmetrically disposed around the entrance. To each side is a single, floor to ceiling window with a triple sash, then a smaller, double-sash window, then three more triple-sash windows. Each of

the large windows is fronted by a narrow stone balcony with a plain metal railing.

On the second through fifth floors, the fenestration pattern is identical. Floor to ceiling triple-hung windows are placed with even spacing across the facade, interrupted twice by smaller, singular windows, creating a rhythm of 3-1-5-1-3. A balcony with a simple metal railing runs across each group of larger windows making them appear more cohesive. These balconies are supported on large, curvilinear metal brackets which extend down between the windows of the floor below. The underside of each balcony is faced with Guastavino tiles, although many of these are now missing. The smaller, single windows are each topped by a flat arch with brick voussoirs, their keystones are faced with glazed green terra cotta.

Above the sixth floor a green tiled roof projects from the facade. This roof is supported on oversized, paired, metal brackets which extend most of the way down to the floor below. A double brick bandcourse encircles the building at the lowest point of the brackets. Between the two rows of brick are circular and diamond-shaped motifs of green glazed terra cotta.

The building at Nos. 507-515 East 77th Street is identical to that just described with the following exception. An extra bay was added to the front facade to link it to the wall of the school playground which it adjoins on the west. This bay is recessed slightly from the rest of the building and carries the same motifs and patterns.

The building at Nos. 508-514 East 78th Street differs in two ways from the building at Nos. 517-523 East 77th Street. Like the building behind it, it also has one extra bay which joins it to the playground on the west. In addition, the entrance opening is surrounded by a plain concave molding rather than the heavy, foliated molding of the two buildings facing 77th Street.

The building at Nos. 516-522 East 78th Street is identical to the first building described except that the entrance opening is framed by a plain, concave molding rather than a foliate molding.

Two of the buildings, Nos. 517-523 East 77th Street and Nos. 516-522 East 78th Street, have facades which face onto Cherokee Place. These facades are identical, continuing the motifs of the East 77th and East 78th Street facades. Only the window rhythms are slightly different. There are no smaller, double-sash windows but the large windows with their balconies are grouped in a 2-5-2 arrangement. In addition there is no areaway at the basement level with the result that the windows here are much smaller.

The western facades of Nos. 507-515 East 77th Street and Nos. 508-514 East 78th Street are visible above the high wall of the adjoining playyard. These identical facades are primarily undecorated, of plain brick pierced by triple-sash windows with balconettes.

On 77th Street and 78th Street a sloping incline leading to a basement entrance partially separates each set of two buildings. The three-sided area thus created has walls faced with plain brick, pierced by triple-sash windows with balconettes. At the roof level a tall, stepped parapet inset

with a narrow niche marks the joining of the two buildings. This parapet is also decorated with brick and stone bandcourses, cornices and circular motifs and keystone in green glazed terra-cotta.

Vaulted passageways lead from each street entrance to the open interior courtyards. The ceilings of these passages are lined with Guastavino tiles while the vertical walls are of glazed brick with insets of patterned brickwork and mailboxes. In the center of the passageway of No. 509 East 77th Street there is a doorway, now blocked off, with an ornate bronze enframement. The door is crowned by a cartouche flanked by garlands. To each side of the door the frame is battered, and is ornamented by incised horizontal lines superimposed with rosettes. A full entablature surmounts the frame.

The interior courtyard of each building is faced with tan brick. Most of the windows are double-sash with some smaller ones. At the center of the north and the south sides of each courtyard each floor has a single, triple-sash window with balconette. Near the roof level, above each bay of windows, a rectangular decorative panel is set into the walls. This panel is filled with a diamond-shaped motif of green, glazed terra cotta surrounded by diamond-laid brickwork.

In each corner of the square courtyard a partially open stairway rises from the first floor to the roof level. Its walls are faced with white glazed tile while the ceilings are of Guastavino tiles. Four apartments open off the landings at each level. Iron handrails at two different heights follow the rise of the stairs. At the outside edge of each landing there is an iron railing with a seat formed in it. A wire glass louver extends over the opening at each level to protect the area from rain and snow. At the sixth floor, this louver opens from a metal ogee arch, slightly more elaborate than the simple elliptical shape of the floors below. The original steel and glass coverings over the stairwells were removed in the 1940s and the tops enclosed by plain brick walls and a small skylight.

Home Hospital

When the East River Homes opened in January 1912, more than 100 of the 383 apartments were already rented to "persons who have a touch of tuberculosis and to delicate ones who are susceptible to the disease."²³ Many others were anxious to move in. In March of the same year, a charitable organization, the New York Association for Improving the Conditions of the Poor leased one section of these buildings for use as a "Home Hospital" for the treatment of tuberculars.²⁴ Here, people with virulent cases of the disease could be placed under a doctor's care while still remaining with their families, rather than being removed to a sanatorium. The concept of a home hospital was that since poverty and disease so often were found together, they should be treated together to eradicate both. Twenty-four apartments, or all units opening on one stairway, were taken for this purpose in 1912. In November 1913, another stairway group with twenty-four apartments was added to the hospital. Each apartment housed an entire family, in which one or more persons suffered from tuberculosis. In this situation, the founders of the Home Hospital hoped to show that an entire family could be kept together without

endangering members not already stricken with the disease. They also wanted to demonstrate that patients could be treated for this disease just as successfully in their own homes as in special institutions and that it would cost much less to keep a family together in this type of environment than to separate them, as was common. ²⁵ Reports issued periodically by the Association showed that this approach could be quite successful in treating the disease and stopping its spread. Since the purpose of the Association was the amelioration of many problems of the poor in New York, they were careful to point out the overall positive effects of living in healthful conditions such as those found in the East River Homes. This type of living situation was seen as a means to attack one of the fundamental causes of the disease.

Conclusion

The East River Homes continued to house tuberculars for many years. In 1923 the trust which ran the tenements was dissolved and, as provided in the original trust agreement, the buildings were conveyed to the Presbyterian Hospital. ²⁶ The hospital ran them through a rental agent for a time but in October 1924, the buildings were sold to the City and Suburban Homes Company ²⁷ and since then have been used as regular rental apartments.

Today, the East River Homes continue to provide healthful and pleasant living conditions for their residents. They serve as a reminder of that period in New York's past when tuberculosis was a dreaded killer and of the many and wide-ranging efforts to stop its destructive effects. The Shively Sanitary Tenements embodied an architectural answer to this devastating problem. Fresh air and sunlight, two of the primary remedies for this disease, were available in abundance, thanks to the courtyards, open stairways, numerous passageways and floor-to-ceiling windows with balconies. These buildings came about because of the forward-thinking, socially-conscious ideas of a prominent physician, Dr. Henry Shively, the generous philanthropy of a well-known patron, Mrs. William Kissam Vanderbilt, and the innovative planning of architect Henry Atterbury Smith. Working with Shively, Smith was able to create a distinctive group of buildings, visually attractive, yet also providing for the unusual needs of its early inhabitants.

Report prepared by
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Research Department

Notes

1. Godias J. Drolet and Anthony M. Lowell, A Half-century's Progress Against Tuberculosis in New York City (New York: New York Tuberculosis and Health Association, 1951), p. xvi.
2. Drolet, p. xxv.
3. Drolet, p. xxii.
4. Drolet, p. xxiv.
5. Drolet, p. xxv.
6. Drolet, p. xxvii.
7. The New York Times, January 18, 1909, p. 8, c. 5.
8. Henry I. Shively, M.D., "Hygienic and Economic Features of the East River Homes Foundation," Reprinted from The New York Architect 5 (November-December, 1911), [4].
9. Shively, p. [6].
10. Ibid.
11. The New York Times, April 21, 1940, p. 1, c. 4.
12. New York County Register's Office. Conveyance records, Liber 181, p. 392.
13. Shively, p. [5].
14. New York County Register's Office. Conveyance records, Liber 181, p. 392.
15. The New York Times, January 6, 1912, p. 12, c. 7.
16. When the site for the East River Homes was chosen, John Jay Park was bisected by 77th Street which continued east to the river. After purchasing the lots for Shively, Mrs. Vanderbilt offered to pay the expenses of having 77th Street stop at Cherokee Place and the two parts of the park united. The New York Times, April 27, 1909, p. 10, c. 7.
17. There were many attempts to improve tenement house design at this time. The general plan of Smith's buildings -- an open, square courtyard with stairways located at each corner -- had been used previously (in an 1894 plan by Ernest Flagg and an 1896 plan by James E. Ware, as seen in James Ford, Slums and Housing, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1936, pp. 882-891.) Open stairs had also been used earlier by Alfred T. White in Brooklyn and in the George Foster Peabody Dwellings in London. Smith refined these ideas and in 1900, registered his plan.

18. Smith's ideas are fully explored in his articles, including:
"Exterior Stairs," American Architect and Building News, 97,
(February 23, 1910), pp. 93-94; "Garden Apartments for Industrial
Workers," (in American Architect, 113, May 22, 1918), 686-689;
"Multi-family Versus Individual Homes," American Institute of
Architects Journal, 5, (1917), 450-452; "War and Industrial
Housing," American Architect, 113, (January 9, 1918), 33-37.
19. Even so, letters in the file at the New York City Buildings Department
show the architect needed special permission from the city for the
large number of stairways included in his plans.
20. Shively, p. [9].
21. Shively, p. [11].
22. Detailed descriptions of the architect's intentions can be found in
Shively's article as well as in Smith's article, "Exterior Stairs."
23. The New York Times, January 6, 1912, p. 12, c. 7.
24. The New York Times, March 21, 1912, p. 10, c. 7.
25. The New York Times, November 29, 1914, p. 9, c. 1.
26. New York County Register's Office, Conveyance Records, Liber 3329,
p. 59.
27. Conveyance Records, Liber 3518, p. 37.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of these buildings, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Shively Sanitary Tenements has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among their important qualities, the Shively Sanitary Tenements are a unique architectural solution to the devastating medical and social problems of tuberculosis; that these buildings represented the original and progressive ideas of physician Dr. Henry Shively; that they benefited from the help of the well-known philanthropist Mrs. William Kissam Vanderbilt; that they were the result of the innovative planning of reform-minded architect Henry Atterbury Smith; that the form of the buildings is a direct result of the special needs of the people who first lived there, including the central courtyards and passageways for air circulation, the open stairways to help stop the passage of germs, and the triple-sash windows with their numerous balconies for greater access to light and air; and that this humanitarian experiment resulted in buildings of unusually handsome design.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 21, Section 534 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Shively Sanitary Tenements (East River Homes, now Cherokee Apartments), 507-515 and 517-523 East 77th Street and 508-514 and 516-522 East 78th Street, Borough of Manhattan, and designates Tax Map Block 1489, Lots 8 and 37, Borough of Manhattan, as its Landmark Site.

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New York Times. January 18, 1909, p. 8, c. 5; February 25, 1909, p. 7, c. 1; November 15, 1909, p. 4, c. 2; November 21, 1909, p. 13, c. 1; January 6, 1912, p. 12, c. 7; March 21, 1912, p. 10, c. 7; October 1, 1912, p. 12, c. 6; October 3, 1912, p. 12, c. 5; November 18, 1913, p. 12, c. 3; November 29, 1914, p. 9, c. 1; May 29, 1917, p. 5, c. 1; April 7, 1927, p. 25, c. 3; April 21, 1940, p. 1, c. 4; September 4, 1954, p. 11, c. 2.

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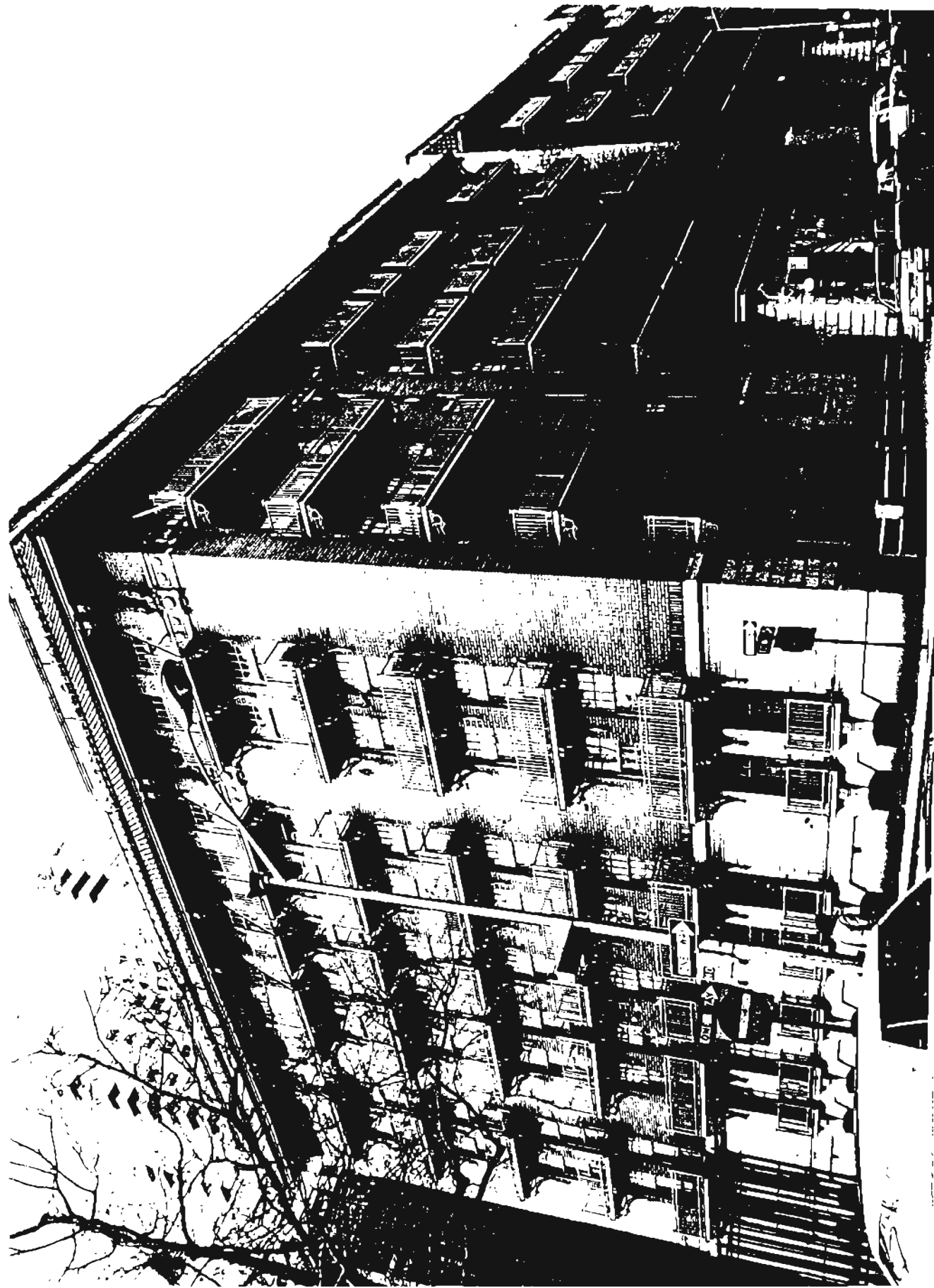
Smith, Henry Atterbury. "Economic Open Stair Communal Dwellings for Industrial Towns." Architecture, 35 (May, 1917), 81-84.

_____. "Exterior Stairs." American Architect and Building News, 97 (February 23, 1910), 93-94.

_____. "Garden Apartments for Industrial Workers." American Architect, 113 (May 22, 1918), 686-689.

_____. "Multi-family Versus Individual Houses." American Institute of Architects Journal, 5 (1917), 450-45.

_____. "War and Industrial Housing." American Architect, 113 (January 9, 1918), 33-37.



Shively Sanitary Tenements
502-523 East 77th Street and 508-522 East 78th Street
Manhattan

Built: 1910-11

Architect: Henry Atterbury Smith

Photo: Andrew S. Dolikart
Landmarks Preservation
Commission



Shively Sanitary Tenements
Detail

Photo: Andrew S. Dolkart
Landmarks Preservation Commission.